

The Barytones And The Tenors In Race to Marry Mrs. Caruso

And the Bassos, Too, Are Looking Ahead with Sentimental Hope to
the Time When the Lovely Young Widow May
Again Think of Bestowing Her Hand and
Heart --- Rivalries Make
Bachelor Singers
Friendly Enemies



Count Andrea de Seguro, who has been one of the Metropolitan's most distinguished barytones, looks upon Mrs. Caruso, his friends all say, with sentimental hope.

And on the right—Young Rafael Diaz, who, it is said, never sings one of his beautiful tenor ballads without picturing in his mind himself as a troubadour at the feet of Mrs. Caruso as his Rosalinde.



Mrs. Caruso, who of course has no thought at all of marriage, despite the clamor for her smile of favor among the tenors and the barytones.



Signor Antonio Scotti, the great Metropolitan barytone and perhaps the closest of the late Mr. Caruso's friends, who, it is said, has laid his heart at the feet of the beautiful Mme. Caruso with the hope that from all the others piled there she picks out his alone.

PERHAPS the most interesting young widow in the United States to-day is Mrs. Enrico Caruso. And Mrs. Caruso is not only young and interesting but she is beautiful, and even when one speaks of romance it is not amiss to say that she is extremely wealthy. Even before she was Mrs. Caruso the beautiful Dorothy Park Benjamin attracted attention wherever she went.

Of course Mrs. Caruso is not giving a thought to another marriage. Her romance with the beloved tenor of the Metropolitan was one of the beautiful things standing out in charming relief against many of the less pleasant features of "operatic" existence. She was particularly happy in holding around her all those many friends who had for so many years formed the coterie of her husband's associates. These learned to love the wife of their great master just as much as they loved him. And those who know Mrs. Caruso intimately know that the sudden death of her husband was a tragedy that will mean most poignant memories of him for a long time to come.

But nevertheless, as was said above, Mrs. Caruso is young and beautiful and charming. And there is no denial of the fact that there are many of her husband's friends who are looking upon her with a sort of sentimental hope in their eyes.

In fact there are some of those friends of her husband who, as loyal to his memory as the most devoted slave might be, still do not conceal their individual hopes that they some day may stand in the master's shoes—in other words, that they, or it should be said one of them, may become the husband of the master's widow. For it is an open secret that all the tenors and all the barytones of the Metropolitan Opera Company who are unmarried now have joined in a sort of race, with Mrs. Caruso as the distant goal.

The barytones are wondering if when she feels as though she might be susceptible to another romance she most naturally would wish to have a barytone. On the other hand, the tenors are unanimous in their conviction that no mere barytone ever will be enshrined in the heart of the lovely young widow. How could she, they ask, even give the slightest thought to the pretenses of a barytone when she was the fair lady of the greatest of tenors? But, the barytones ask, would not a tenor constantly recall memories of one whose art may never be approached? Will she not wish to avoid all reminders of the "perfect one"? And so will it not be a barytone that she will next fall in love with, to the exclusion of those tenors who never—they say—will be able to repeat the master's triumphs?

Mrs. Caruso herself, of course, says nothing. Her friends declare, and it may well be believed, that neither barytone nor tenor has yet had the presumption to even let her know that they look upon her as more than a possible friend. But gradually the smiles are coming back to Mrs. Caruso's face. Of late she has more and more been taking interest in affairs beyond her household. This augurs the approach of a time when some one, barytone or tenor, may confidently make love to her. And that is the time the tenors and the barytones are patiently awaiting.

In that very vivacious circle which is made up of those who have more or less to do with opera affairs, any one will say

that the foremost of the barytones who look into the future with sentimental thoughts at the merest mention of Mrs. Caruso's name is Signor Antonio Scotti. Signor Scotti was perhaps the closest and the dearest of Caruso's friends. In his bachelor days it was Scotti who used to go with Caruso to the quaint little Italian restaurants in the odd corners of the city, where Caruso loved to dine after an appearance at the Metropolitan. When Caruso was courting Dorothy Park Benjamin it was Scotti who was his confidant. There are those even who say that it was Scotti who first broke the news to the charming Miss Benjamin that Caruso actually was in love with her. Be that as it may, Scotti was always close to the romantic pair during the first days of their marriage, and it was he who always was last to leave the steamer when they went abroad.

It was Scotti who met Mrs. Caruso at the pier when she returned from her beloved husband's funeral. It was he to whom she cabled certain instructions as to the disposition of her husband's effects before she left Italy to return a widow to America. During those first few weeks after Mrs. Caruso's return, when she needed, more than at any other time, reliance upon a dependable friend, it was Scotti to whom she turned—for she knew that Signor Scotti had loved her husband as one good man loves another.

Scotti, of course, has never confided to even his closest friends that he hopes some day Mrs. Caruso will look with more than a friendly favor upon his attendance. But these same friends have a way of seeing things which they interpret to suit themselves. Every one of them declares that Scotti, who in the past has loved and lost many, many times, is loving again, and this time determined that he shall not lose.

On the other hand, there is young Rafael Diaz, a tenor. Signor Diaz ranks high in the Metropolitan list of stars. He is young and has not so many years of experience, and yet he is in a fair way to become one of the greatest of the world's singers. Some would not be surprised if in the not distant future there would be memories of Caruso himself in air, sung by Diaz.

Signor Diaz is a gallant chap and, as are all South Americans, extremely romantic. Certainly he has not let it become known that his gallantry to the beautiful Mrs. Caruso means anything more than a South American gentleman's tributes to the widow of one who stood at the head of his profession. But, then, there are those friends again. One after another, these have shook their heads with knowing mystery and have said, in effect:

"Ah, me, Signor Diaz, he is losing his



Little Gloria Caruso, who, it is said, will some time be a great singer like her father. And perhaps she is destined to have a stepfather also a world famed singer.

heart, the lovely widow overcomes him."

Scotti's friends upon hearing this all say:

"Poof, poof!"

"They do not believe, any of them, that Mrs. Caruso will ever lose her heart to another tenor. 'Any other tenor would seem so poor and ridiculous to her,' they say."

To which the friends of Diaz return also:

"Poof, poof!" They ask, "How could she ever put up with a barytone?"

And then, besides, there is another who never denies, when the question is put to him, that when the time comes he will be one of those to lay their hearts at Mrs. Caruso's feet. This one is a basso. He is

a most important gentleman, wealthy and distinguished, and besides a nobleman of Mr. Caruso's own country.

Count Andrea de Seguro used to be one of the outstanding members of the Metropolitan staff. He, like Scotti, was a barytone. De Seguro probably is the frankest of all the singers in his ambition to become the husband of the young widow. He has a way about him that is impulsive and frank. He is one who if he were in love would tell the world and ask the world to congratulate him. He was just that way when he was at the verge of marrying Anna Fittiu. That was a romance which kept the Metropolitan's singers on their tiptoes for many months. It was said De Seguro nearly swept Miss Fittiu off her feet by the impetuosity of his wooing.

They were engaged quite a long time, and then suddenly the engagement was broken. Why no one has ever known. Each time any one has asked De Seguro why the marriage that was scheduled for June did not materialize he has put his monocle in his eye, and assuming an expression of tragic grief he has replied:

"There is only one reason any marriage ever fails to materialize. And that is because the woman refuses to have the man."

This is just like Count de Seguro.

It is said De Seguro has paid attentions quite frankly to Mrs. Caruso, although, of course, they have been delicately rendered and with true appreciation of the fact that she will not be thinking of a new romance for perhaps many years to come. There have been many calls of consolation at the pretty greenstone house in Fifty-fifth street, where Mrs. Caruso makes her home. There have been many flowers delivered there bearing the card of Count de Seguro.

And it has been noticed on many occasions when Mrs. Caruso attended rehearsals of concerts at the Metropolitan Count de Seguro lingered longer than all

the rest to pay his respects to her and to her little daughter, Gloria.

And this is very interesting—these appearances of Mrs. Caruso at the Metropolitan's rehearsals. She attends many of them, just as she used to when her husband was the principal singer. And as she seats herself in the darkened auditorium there is bound to be some one of the group on the stage to see her, and then there is a veritable pilgrimage across the footlights, down the darkened aisles, of prima donnas, tenors, barytones and bassos—all to say a kindly word to the visitor.

Signor Diaz, Signor Scotti and the others who belong to the company have always had to return to the stage to take their parts in the rehearsals. But Count de Seguro does not belong now to the Metropolitan staff. His business is in Havana and he is largely a distinguished gentleman of leisure. So he may always remain during the rehearsal seated at Mrs. Caruso's side, with Gloria playing about his knee.

Those who do not look with favor upon De Seguro in the race for Mrs. Caruso's heart—and these, of course, comprise those who favor some other contestant—declare contemptuously that a basso is not the pitch of love. A barytone, they say, may sing a love ballad most exquisitely. A tenor, they add, has the natural pitch of romance. And so these will say that De Seguro is seriously handicapped.

But then the friends of Count Andrea de Seguro say that the barytone is not the pitch of love, and that if one must woo Mrs. Caruso with song it must be either the tenor or the basso. And most assuredly the friends of the tenor all say that it is only he who sings in the pitch familiar to Caruso who may successfully make love to any woman.

So there seems to be plenty to say in favor of each of those who are in the race to marry the young widow, and there is just as much to say against their chances.

Mrs. Caruso seems to have stepped completely out of the atmosphere which surrounded her when she was Miss Benjamin, and to have made herself thoroughly at home and contented in the atmosphere which belonged to her husband. When she

became Mrs. Caruso she became indeed a devoted wife, one whose motto seems to have been, "Your people shall be my people." She entered into the operatic circle under auspices seldom approached by any outsider. She was something of a queen in all these associations, and was looked upon as a beloved leader by those whose interests are so closely interwoven with the affairs of grand opera and concerts. She has chosen to remain enthroned in this atmosphere. So it is not amiss that those who promised to have something to do with her future life should be found among the singers who were her husband's friends.

It is a good natured race and one which is so delicately managed that Mrs. Caruso has not yet been in the slightest way offended. There has been no undue haste. There has been no taking advantage of her loneliness. Those barytones, tenors and bassos whose friends openly declare they are only awaiting the proper time to begin an impetuous courting of the young widow have been most careful to remember that the memory of Enrico Caruso must still be very vivid in his widow's heart and that it would offend her deeply to even be approached with a suggestion of another marriage. But love exists without reason and in defiance of conventions. Some day, love says, Mrs. Caruso will marry again. And why, indeed, should it not be a tenor, a barytone or a basso, and why should not the race begin now when the finish is far enough away to give them all an equal chance?

It is whispered that there is a little pool going around the Metropolitan, subscribed to now by many ladies and gentlemen not only of the chorus but of the higher ranks, in which the winner of the pool will be determined only when Mrs. Caruso decides to accept another husband. Some of the members of the pool have wagered on a tenor, some on a barytone and some on a basso. Those who have been mentioned in this account are only the most prominent of the entrants in the race. There are many others, and that is what makes the wagers interesting.